

Message Text

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PAGE 01 LUSAKA 01768 231258Z
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C O N F I D E N T I A L LUSAKA 1768

E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: EAIR, ZA
SUBJ: STATE/AID SOUTHERN AFRICA TRANSPORTATION PROGRAM
PLANNING STUDY

REF: STATE 142970

1. WITH RESPECT TO CONCLUSION A IN REFTTEL, MAJOR NEW INTER-REGIONAL TRUNK ROAD AND RAIL TRANSPORTATION ROUTES FOR ZAMBIA CANNOT BE JUSTIFIED ON PURELY ECONOMIC GROUNDS. HOWEVER, VARIOUS ZAMBIAN EXISTING ROUTES NO LONGER ARE AVAILABLE FOR POLITICAL REASONS. THEIR CLOSURE HAS ADVERSELY AFFECTED ZAMBIA'S ECONOMY. TO ASSURE CONTINUED ACCESS TO THE SEA IT IS IN ZAMBIA'S INTEREST THAT THERE BE AS MANY OPTIONS AVAILABLE AS POSSIBLE. THE ONLY ROUTE NOW OPEN WHICH MIGHT BE EXPLOITED TO A GREATER EXTENT IS THE BOTZAM ROAD. PAVING OF THAT ROAD IS ALREADY UNDERWAY AND WHEN COMPLETED SHOULD PROVIDE ZAMBIA WITH SOME RELIEF.

2. EXISTING TRUNK AND RAIL ROUTES WITHIN ZAMBIA DO NOT REQUIRE MAJOR REHABILITATION. HOWEVER, WHILE ROAD ACCESS WITHIN ZAMBIA TO THE MALAWI BORDER AT CHIPATA IS EXCELLENT, THE MALAWI PORTION OF THAT ROUTE TO LILONGWE IS NOT YET PAVED. COMPLETION OF THAT SEGMENT WITHIN MALAWI WILL PROVIDE
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AN ADDITIONAL ALL WEATHER ROUTE TO THE SEA FOR ZAMBIA.

3. THE SUBJECT STUDY DOES NOT INCLUDE REFERENCE TO THE SO-CALLED PEDICLE ROAD WHICH CUTS ACROSS ZAIRE JOINING THE COPPERBELT AND LUAPULA PROVINCES OF ZAMBIA. WHILE THE ROAD IS OF LITTLE IMPORTANCE TO ZAIRE IT PROVIDES A 90 MILE LINK BETWEEN THE AGRICULTURALLY IMPORTANT LUAPULA PROVINCE AND

THE MAJOR POPULATION CENTERS OF THE COPPERBELT. THE ONLY
ALL WEATHER ALTERNATIVE BETWEEN THESE PROVINCES OF ZAMBIA IS
A CIRCUTOUS 800 MILE ROUTE. THE PEDICLE ROAD IS NOT NOW
PAVED AND IS REPORTED TO BE IN VERY POOR CONDITION. PAVING
OF THIS ROAD WOULD BE IN ZAMBIA'S ECONOMIC INTEREST.
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